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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/24/2026  
TAGS: [IR](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: TURKEY SEARCHES IRANIAN TRUCKS FOR HEZBOLLAH ARMS  
SHIPMENTS

REF: A. ANKARA 4895  
[1](#)B. ANKARA 4489

Classified By: Pol-Mil Counselor Carl Siebentritt, reason  
1.4 b/d.

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Turkey has intensified its inspections of Iranian trucks in recent weeks following the initiation of aircraft inspections (ref b). Customs officials report that a lack of necessary technology at border crossings limits the number and scope of inspections but claim they have not encountered anything suspicious to date. Early Parliamentary approval of our bilateral agreement "Regarding Cooperation to Facilitate the Provision of Assistance for Non-Proliferation Purposes" (Non-Proliferation Agreement) will allow us to furnish, under the EXBS program, the advanced screening technology Turkey needs to prevent the transit of illicit materials. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Ali Aygun, Customs Department Head for Enforcement, confirmed August 23 Turkish Customs' awareness of news reports that Iran could be supplying weapons and other support to Hezbollah via Syria. He told us that Turkish Customs is conducting appropriate checks on vehicles and trucks crossing the border between Turkey and Iran. He said that authorities so far had not discovered any arms shipments coming from Iran into Turkey. Meanwhile, the Turkish press has reported intensified inspections at Turkey's Gurbuluk border crossing with Iran.

[1](#)3. (C) Aygun added that Turkish Customs inspections are limited by the lack of sophisticated technology at these border crossings. There is no fixed x-ray equipment which can be used to easily check the cargo of trucks. Customs utilizes Threat and Risk Management techniques to determine which trucks must undergo secondary inspection at the border. Officials also conduct random checks on vehicles. In addition to the movement of weapons, Customs is concerned about the transit of drugs and human trafficking from Iran. Aygun emphasized that weapons and other illegal or controlled items are not allowed to transit Turkey without proper documentation and licenses.

[1](#)4. (SBU) We noted that the Turkish Parliament's delay in ratifying our bilateral Non-Proliferation Agreement has impeded the delivery of U.S. equipment, via the EXBS program, that could aid in the detection of contraband crossing the Turkish borders. While bilateral training and professional

exchanges are ongoing, the actual delivery of equipment to assist in border inspections cannot occur until ratification.

This includes upgrades to the Portal Monitors under the Second Line of Defense Program, portable x-ray vans and other inspection equipment. Aygun noted this and undertook to remind senior Customs officials of the importance of Parliament's quick ratification of this agreement.

¶5. (C) We have also raised the possibility of truck or train transit with MFA officials in recent meetings. They acknowledged they have considered the possibility and welcomed any specific, credible information that we can share.

¶6. (C) Comment: We understand the NP Agreement remains on Parliament's agenda for consideration early in the coming session; we will continue to press for a quick ratification. End Comment.

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